

## **Islamic Education Based on the Aswaja Understanding in Character Building the Young Generation in the Digital Era**

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### **Abstract**

Islamic education based on the Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah paradigm plays a strategic role in shaping the character of the younger generation in the digital age. This study aims to examine the significance of Aswaja-based Islamic education in shaping ethical and resilient character amid rapid technological change. Using a qualitative research design with a library-based approach, data were collected through document analysis and analyzed using content analysis techniques. The findings show that Aswaja-based Islamic education emphasizes the core values of tawassuth (moderation), tawazun (balance), tasamuh (tolerance), and al-'adl (justice), which serve as basic principles in facing digital challenges. These values contribute to the formation of moderate, balanced, tolerant, and just character among the younger generation. In addition, this study reveals that Aswaja functions as a moral and spiritual framework that transforms digital technology from a potential threat into a means of ethical development. The integration of Aswaja values strengthens spiritual resilience and social harmony, enabling young people to face global disruptions without losing their moral compass. This study concludes that Aswaja-based Islamic education offers an adaptive and contextual framework that connects technological advancement with spiritual integrity, serving as a mechanism to prevent radicalism and moral degradation in cyberspace while fostering morally grounded and socially responsible digital citizens.

**Keywords:** Aswaja, Character Building, Digital Era

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* (Aswaja) is a religious perspective based on moderate and tolerant Islamic teachings. In Islamic education, Aswaja plays a crucial role in shaping *the character of the younger generation*, especially in facing the challenges of the ever-advancing digital world.<sup>1</sup> In the digital era, Aswaja-based education is useful in fostering universal Islamic values, such as inclusivity, equality, unity, justice, and wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

Massive technological developments present new challenges to the Islamic education process, resulting in the younger generation being more connected to the virtual world, which does not always align with Aswaja values.<sup>3</sup> This view is reinforced by Zainal Arifin's opinion, highlighting that young people's mindsets and behaviors are often influenced by digital content

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<sup>1</sup> Syarifah Marwiyah and Sayono Sayono, "Internalization and Actualization of Aswaja Character Education Values in Students in the 4.0 Era," *Jiep: Journal of Islamic Education and Pedagogy*, Vol 1, No. 01 (2024): 69.

<sup>2</sup> Khoidul Hoir, "Internalization of Aswaja Al-Nahdliyah Values in the Practice of National Ideology Among Sampang Youth," *Uin Sunan Ampel Surabaya*, (2019): 5.

<sup>3</sup> Tian Wahyudi, "Strengthening Digital Literacy of the Young Muslim Generation Within the Framework of the Ulul Albab Concept," *Al-Mutharrahah: Journal of Research and Social Religious Studies*, Vol 18, No. 2 (2021): 162.

that is inconsistent with Islamic teachings.<sup>4</sup> Aswaja values in Islamic education are becoming increasingly relevant, providing solid guidance to the younger generation.

The importance of discussing Islamic education based on Aswaja cannot be overstated. Young people are the nation's successors and assets, continuing and enlivening Islamic and national values in society. Islamic education based on Aswaja can serve as a moral bulwark, protecting them from the negative influences of the digital era. As Abdurrahman Wahid explains, Aswaja's tolerant and inclusive values can build a collective consciousness that can minimize social divisions caused by differences in perspective and ideology.<sup>5</sup>

Studies on character formation within the Aswaja framework have been conducted through various complementary perspectives. *First*, the study entitled "Aswaja-Based Character Education of Nahdlatul Ulama in the Era of Disruption: Between Challenges and Innovation"<sup>6</sup> by Tri Yugo emphasizes the adaptation of the Islamic boarding school curriculum in the face of technological disruption. *Second*, the journal "The Relevance of Aswaja Values in Shaping Student Character in the Digital Era"<sup>7</sup> examines the resilience of traditional values when implemented in the context of modernity. *Third*, the article "Internalization and Actualization of Aswaja Character Education Values in Facing the Era of Modernization and Digitalization"<sup>8</sup> from UAS focuses on how the values of *tasamuh* and *tawazun* are actually practiced by students. *Fourth*, the study "Optimizing Aswaja Education in the Millennial Generation"<sup>9</sup> highlights the role of Aswaja as an ideological instrument to stem radicalism. Finally, the journal "The Role of Islamic Education in Shaping Al-Qur'an-Based Character in the Digital Era"<sup>10</sup> provides a normative basis for the integration of technology in the formation of morality in general.

Although the five studies above are thematically related, there are fundamental differences that create gaps for this research. Most previous studies focused on a single, specific aspect, such as curriculum innovation (Tri Yugo), radicalism prevention (Neliti), or the internalization of specific values. Most also focused on specific institutional loci (such as schools or Islamic boarding schools) without formulating a comprehensive philosophical-practical framework that connects the four pillars of Aswaja and addresses complex digital behaviors.

The study, "Islamic Education Based on the Aswaja Ideology in Character Building of the Young Generation in the Digital Era," aims to address this gap by offering a more systemic and integrative approach. Unlike previous studies, which tended to be partial, this study positions the four pillars of the Aswaja ideology—*tawaassuth*, *tawazun*, *tasamuh*, and *i'tid l*

<sup>4</sup> Nikma Zuhairoh and Indera Ratna Irawati Pattinasarany, "Partnership of Vocational High Schools (Smk) with the Business World/Industrial World (Du/Di) as an Implementation of Smk Revitalization (Study of Partnership Governance at Private Smk 'Dp' in East Jakarta)," *Jisip (Journal of Social Sciences and Education)*, Vol 5, No. 3 (2021): 49–53.

<sup>5</sup> Mumtahar Kholil, "Religious Tolerance Education (Study of the Thought of Kh. Abdurrahman Wahid)" (Phd Thesis, Iain Purwokerto, 2021): 43.

<sup>6</sup> Bandung Islamic University, "Character Education Based on Nahdlatul Ulama's Aswaja in the Era of Disruption: Between Challenges and Innovation" 3, no. 1 (2025): 1.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Syukron and Fitra Firdian, "The Relevance of Aswaja Values in Shaping Student Character in the Digital Era" 3, no. 1 (2025): 1.

<sup>8</sup> Syarifah Marwiyah, "Internalization and Actualization of Aswaja Character Education Values in Students in the 4.0 Era" 1, no. 1 (2024).

<sup>9</sup> Su'udin Aziz, "Al Ulya: Journal of Islamic Education Volume 4 Number I, January – June 2019 Edition" 4, no. 1 (2019): 1.

<sup>10</sup> Khairul Fahmi, Andri Priatma, and Muhammad Wahyudi, "The Role of Islamic Education in Forming Character Based on the Qur'an in the Digital Era" 2, no. 1 (2024): 1.

—as a unified "digital compass." This research seeks to synthesize these values as a character transformation strategy applicable to contemporary cyber phenomena such as hoaxes, *cyberbullying*, and digital polarization.

The implication of this follow-up study is the emergence of an adaptive Islamic education model, where technology is not viewed as a threat, but rather as a space for preaching and creativity, guided by the spiritual power of Aswaja. This research goes beyond simply optimizing values, but rather formulates a character architecture for a younger generation that possesses both intellectual intelligence and noble character on the global stage.

The Aswaja values are highly relevant in shaping the personality of the younger generation. The Aswaja scholarly tradition, which emphasizes the importance of knowledge, good deeds, and morals, provides a strong foundation for creating a civilized society. Al-Ghazali's view of education oriented toward moral formation serves as an important reference. Al-Ghazali emphasized that ideal education is one that integrates religious values with social realities.<sup>11</sup>

However, the digital era brings various challenges that Aswaja-based Islamic education must face, including the influence of social media, which often promotes popular culture that conflicts with Islamic values. According to Abdullah's research, social media can pose a threat if not used wisely, especially for the younger generation who are still developing their character.<sup>12</sup> Addressing these challenges requires innovative and contemporary educational strategies. Aswaja-based Islamic education must utilize technology as a tool to disseminate positive values.

Religious leaders also play a crucial role in integrating Aswaja values with Islamic education. They must serve as role models who can inspire the younger generation to adopt Aswaja values in their daily lives.<sup>13</sup> According to Azyumardi Azra, the success of Islamic education depends heavily on the role of educators and religious leaders in instilling values relevant to the needs of the times.<sup>14</sup>

Based on the above background, this study aims to explore how the Aswaja ideology can shape *the character of the younger generation* in the digital world. The desired character is a generation that possesses noble morals, is able to critically approach digital information, and upholds Islamic values. The main focus of this research is to understand the role of Aswaja-based Islamic education in developing a young generation with character in the digital era. Integrating Aswaja principles is a strategic step to shape the character of the younger generation in the digital era. With a holistic and innovative approach, Islamic education can be an effective solution to face the challenges of the times while maintaining a moderate and inclusive Islamic identity. Therefore, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to the development of Islamic education based on Aswaja values in the digital era. On this basis, the researcher took the theme "Islamic Education based on Aswaja Understanding in Forming the Character of the Young Generation in the Digital Era".

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<sup>11</sup> Mansur Yatim, "Submitted to the Postgraduate Program of Raden Intan State Islamic University of Lampung to Fulfill One of the Requirements for Obtaining a Master's Degree in Islamic Religious Education," 2023, 32.

<sup>12</sup> Yayat Suharyat, Abdul Ghofur, and Amiruddin Abdullah, "Rabbani Education in the Qur'an," *Al-Liqo: Journal of Islamic Education*, Vol 7, No. 2 (December 31, 2022): 110.

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Aldi, "The Role of Islamic Speech in Strengthening Islamic Religious Education: Building the Character of a Generation with Noble Morals," TT, 299.

<sup>14</sup> Pandi Mohamad and Mujahid Damopolii, "Problems and Modernization of Islamic Education," 2025, 91.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research employed a qualitative, descriptive analysis method. This approach was chosen to explore in-depth how Aswaja-based Islamic education shapes the character of the younger generation in the digital age. The primary data for this study were sourced from secondary literature, including academic journals, books, and other relevant sources.

This research approach is a library research, with discussions referring to various available literature, including books, journals, theses, articles, and other publications. The data collection technique used in this study is document review. In this document review, the researcher used references from books, theses, journals, articles, and other internet sites.

The researcher explored various available literature to fulfill this assignment. Specifically, the researcher searched for references relevant to the above title. In searching for various references, the researcher used several sources, including Google Scholar, the internet, and books. The researcher also analyzed the data using content analysis *techniques*.

This research method serves as a scientific step in describing various issues and solutions to the identified problems. Furthermore, this method assists the author in locating the necessary data, thus minimizing difficulties in compiling research results. The research is expected to provide a clear picture of the legal challenges in the digital economy and e-commerce, as well as provide practical contributions to policymakers and industry players in creating a legal environment that supports technological innovation.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Islamic Education Based on the Aswaja Ideology in the Digital Era**

The Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah (Aswaja) understanding is a religious paradigm deeply rooted in the history of Islamic development. Its main characteristics are rooted in the principles of moderation (*tawassuth*), balance (*tawazun*), tolerance (*tasamuh*), and justice (*'adalah*).<sup>15</sup> According to Harun Nasution, Aswaja strives to maintain the purity of Islamic teachings based on the Qur'an, the Prophet's Sunnah, the consensus of scholars, and *qiyyas* (equivalence).<sup>16</sup> This understanding mediates the extremist movements of groups that lean toward liberal interpretations of religion and groups that are overly textual.

The following is a description of the main characteristics of the Aswaja school of thought:

#### **a. Moderation (*tawassuth*)**

The thoughts of Lukman Hakim Saifuddin and M. Quraish Shihab provide the foundation that moderation is a perspective that rejects extreme poles in order to achieve accuracy (*i'tid l*).<sup>17</sup> In Islamic education, this view positions religion not as a tool for conflict, but as a proportional balance between right and wrong. Consistent with Quraish Shihab's view,

<sup>15</sup> Siti Yumnah, "The Existence of Islamic Education in Nu and Muhammadiyah as a Portrait of Moderate Islam in Indonesia," *Proceedings of the Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (April 15, 2022): 158.

<sup>16</sup> Asep Dhoni Syaiful Milah et al., "PMII Aswaja School and the Reproduction of Cadre Awareness : Theological Analysis of Historical Material, Principles, and Mabadi Khairu Ummah," *Phonology* 3, no. 2 (2025): 7.

<sup>17</sup> Roihatul Jannah et al., "Message of Religious Moderation from M. Quraish Shihab in Najwa Shihab's YouTube Channel, Islam Wasathiyah Edition, Islam in the Middle," *Journal of Islamic Sciences* 19, no. 1 (2023): 4.

moderation in Islamic education is not a static mathematical balance, but rather an intelligent assessment of the situation, allowing the integration of spiritual values and digital technological developments to proceed harmoniously for the common good.

Ethically, Buya Hamka's ideas on a peaceful approach and rejection of radicalism reinforce the concept of *tahdz b al-nafs* (self-discipline) in Aswaja education. In the often provocative digital space, moderation transforms into practical wisdom, or *phronesis*, to convey the truth politely.<sup>18</sup> Islamic education, in this context, sharpens the conscience so that individuals have self-control, avoiding being trapped in banal discourse and instead prioritizing enlightening and non-coercive arguments.

Difference is a blessing that demands *adab al-ikhtil f* (ethics of differing opinions). Aswaja moderation in Islamic education serves as an instrument for managing plurality as a social fact of *diversity*. By viewing differences as a sociological reality that must be respected, education creates individuals with high levels of scientific empathy. This ensures that amidst the flow of divisive information, social cohesion is maintained through an inclusive and dialogical religious attitude.

Islamic education based on Aswaja ensures that technology and modern advancements do not dominate spiritual awareness but, instead, serve as a means to attain wisdom. By placing technology in a proper and appropriate place, the younger generation grows into morally responsible individuals. Ultimately, moderation serves as a pillar that keeps people rooted in their spirituality while actively contributing to contemporary social and technological dynamics.

### **b. Balance (*tawazun*)**

In Islamic education based on the Aswaja ideology, balance is synonymous with the harmony between reason (*aqliyyah*) and revelation (*naqliyyah*), which is the embodiment of Aristotle's concept of "*The Golden Mean*." Intellectual virtue lies in the middle point, not trapped in the extremes of rationalism that blindly deifies technology, but also does not fall into dogmatism that rejects science. By viewing technological integration as a manifestation of<sup>19</sup> *the kauniyah* verses, Islamic education based on the Aswaja ideology creates a balance that prevents the "lack" of digital literacy while avoiding the "excess" of secularism. The result is spiritual submission born of sophisticated thinking, towards true happiness (*eudaimonia*) based on faith.

The principle of *al-muh fazhatu 'ala al-qad mi al-sh lih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jad di al-ashlah* psychologically resonates with Fritz Heider's Theory of Balance. In the disruptive digital era, Islamic education maintains stability in life to avoid tension (dissonance) between classical tradition and modern innovation.<sup>20</sup> By respecting the sanad of knowledge (tradition) while actively developing critical reasoning (innovation), individuals achieve a state of equilibrium. This balance ensures that changes in the times do not uproot cultural identity, but rather strengthen the relevance of knowledge in managing the rapid flow of information.

Balance also concerns cognitive development and the purification of the soul (*tahdz b al-nafs*) in Aswaja, reflecting the essence of *At-Tawazun* in Islam. This concept rejects educational patterns that are solely oriented towards physical or materialistic results. Amidst

<sup>18</sup> Farhan Abdillah Dalimunthe, "A Study of Buya Hamka's Thoughts in Building Religious Tolerance in Indonesia," 2019, 9.

<sup>19</sup> Kholilurrahman et al., "Quranic Self-Awareness Through the Atomic Habits Method in Building Spiritual Character," *Zad Al-Mufassirin* 4, no. 2 (2022): 3.

<sup>20</sup> Amrina Rosida, "Communication Balance Patterns of Female Migrant Workers' Families in Building Harmony," *Audiens Journal* 3, no. 3 (2022): 4.

social media competition that triggers mental imbalance, Islamic education emphasizes that harmony in life is achieved when the ego submits to the values of adab. The formation of *an adab person* is an effort to maintain a balance between the needs of self-existence and moral responsibility to the public, so that knowledge is used to build public welfare, not to satisfy personal ambitions.

The internalization of the value of *i'tid l* (proportional justice) in Aswaja education aligns with the Islamic vision of harmony between individual and societal interests. In the digital space, this principle goes beyond mere communication ethics; it is a form of practical justice in granting rights to others and maintaining social cohesion. By understanding the balance between privacy and public space, Aswaja students are able to position technology appropriately as an instrument for strengthening the community. This proportional justice ensures that digital technological advancements do not trigger disintegration but rather serve as a means to create a just and meaningful social order.

### **c. Tolerance (*tasamuh*)**

Islamic education based on the Aswaja ideology adopts the principles of Buya Hamka and Imam Syafi'i regarding respect for the sovereignty of individual beliefs. As Buya Hamka's message in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 256, teaches that the truth of Islam is conveyed through polite preaching, not coercion. In a digital age filled with coercive commentary, Imam Syafi'i's principle of maintaining harmonious relationships despite differences of opinion is crucial.<sup>21</sup> Islamic education emphasizes that differences of opinion (*ikhtilaf*) are a space for mutual enrichment, not an arena for misleading each other, thus fostering an open-minded attitude in facing the diversity of religious expressions on social media.

In line with Nurcholish Madjid's thinking, Islamic education in the digital age encourages open-mindedness. Tolerance is understood as the rational ability to respect the opinions and behavior of others for the sake of living together peacefully.<sup>22</sup> Locke emphasized the separation of public and private spaces, which Aswaja translates as the ability to practice good manners in communicating in cyberspace.<sup>23</sup> Students are taught to embrace diversity as a divine law, using technology to build cross-identity dialogue based on objective arguments, not hateful sentiments.

Islamic education fosters awareness that digital stability can only be achieved if the majority group is able to exercise restraint and protect the rights of minorities. Tolerance, in this context, is a practical tool for achieving common goals (*mashlahah ammah*). Amidst social media algorithms that tend to create polarization, Aswaja education teaches the importance of inclusivity to prevent conflict and ensure every individual feels safe in expressing themselves.

Tolerance in Aswaja education transforms into an attitude of tolerance toward things we may personally disagree with. This is the highest level of moral maturity: allowing different customs or opinions to exist without feeling threatened. In an era of information overload, Aswaja education emphasizes character development that is not easily provoked by differences. By drawing on the spirit of goodness from various perspectives and understanding

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<sup>21</sup> Nur Hidayah, "Reorientation of Tasamuh in Multicultural-Based Religious Education," *In Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society*, Vol 1, No. 1 (2016): 95.

<sup>22</sup> Adi Rahmat Kurniawan, "Islam and Human Rights (HAM) in the View of Nurcholish Madjid Adi," *AL-IKTIAR: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 2024, 8.

<sup>23</sup> Ulfah Nury Batubara et al., "John Locke's Liberalism and Its Influence on the Order of Life," *Journal of Education and Development* 9, no. 4 (2021): 2–3.

them sociologically, students grow into individuals capable of forging peace amidst the "storm" of digital differences.

#### **d. *I'tidal (justice)***

Islamic education based on the Aswaja ideology views *i'tid l* as the foundation for understanding the relationship between the Creator and creation. As developed by Imam Ash'ari and Imam Al-Maturidi, this concept guides people to avoid the extremes of fatalism (*jabariyyah*) or free rationalism (*mu'tazilah*). *In the Islamic education curriculum, this manifests itself in the integration of naqliyyah (religious) and aqliyyah (worldly) sciences.*<sup>24</sup> *I'tid l* in Islamic education also means the ability to place religious teachings proportionally within local culture. The phenomenon of "indigenization of Islam" promoted by figures such as Kiai Sahal Mahfudz demonstrates that Islamic education need not uproot the nation's culture. Aswaja Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia serve as laboratories where traditions such as *tahlilan* and *maulid* are viewed as inclusive means of *da'wah*.<sup>25</sup> Here, *i'tid l* teaches that upholding religious principles (*al-ushul*) can go hand in hand with the adoption of local wisdom (*al-furu'*), thus presenting Islam as a contextual and flexible religion in the face of sociocultural dynamics.

From a socio-political perspective, Aswaja-based education instills the value of *i'tid l*, prioritizing stability and harmony over group ambitions. Young people are taught that the unity of the ummah (*ittih d al-ummah*) is a more important pillar of justice than divisions caused by differing aspirations. This is reflected in Aswaja's view of democracy in Indonesia as a modern form of *deliberation*. This education fosters character that respects legitimate leadership and rejects radicalism, ensuring that every citizen is able to contribute to building social justice without sacrificing public peace.

At its most advanced level, *i'tid l* serves as a pedagogical instrument to address the challenges of modernity and global society. Aswaja-based Islamic education not only transfers knowledge but also relevant *life skills*. *With a solid foundation of Islamic thought and flexible empirical practice, Aswaja graduates are expected to become human beings with good manners*, individuals capable of positioning themselves fairly amidst global diversity. This is an inclusive model of religiosity, one that makes justice the compass for collective decision-making, thus maintaining harmony amidst the complexities of the contemporary world.

### **Character Building for the Young Generation Through Islamic Education Based on the Aswaja Ideology**

Islamic education has a central role in forming the *character* of the people based on Aswaja *values*. Education is not just the transfer of knowledge, but also the internalization of moral and ethical values originating from Islamic teachings. Thinkers such as Imam Al-Ghazali stated that Islamic education aims to create individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also spiritually and socially mature. This approach places Aswaja values as the basis for the formation of a balanced human being in worldly and everyday life.<sup>26</sup>

#### **a. Moderate Character**

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<sup>24</sup> Yanto Maulana Restu et al., "The Role of Al-Asy'ari and Al-Maturidi in Preserving the Aqidah of Ahlussunah Wal Jamaah," *An-Nahdloh: Journal of Education and Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2026): 3.

<sup>25</sup> Muchlis Bahar, "Methodological Construction and Axiological Dimensions of Fiqh," *AKELERASI: Jurnal ILMIAH Nasional* 2, no. 1 (2020): 6.

<sup>26</sup> Ridwan Saleh, Ibrah Safirah, and Herlini Puspika Sari, "Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of Education; Relevance in the Context of Modern Education," *Ihsan: Journal of Islamic Education*, Vol 2, No. 4 (2024): 72.

The digital age offers unlimited access to knowledge, but simultaneously threatens moral stability through polarization and decadence. In this context, character education based on the Aswaja ideology serves as an instrument for developing ethical and responsible individuals. In line with John Dewey's concept of education as ethical personal development, the younger generation is taught the ability to critically analyze information.<sup>27</sup> This character formation is not simply a transmission of values, but an effort to develop a "mental filter" so that individuals can manage social interactions in cyberspace without losing their moral integrity.

One of the core principles of Aswaja-based education is the instilling of the principle of moderation (*tawaassuth*). Yusuf Al-Qaradawi emphasized that a generation that is not extreme in its thinking and actions is key to facing the challenges of modernity.<sup>28</sup> In the digital age, this value translates into the ability to maintain a balance between the use of technology and fulfilling spiritual needs. By integrating the concept of moderation into the curriculum, Islamic education creates space for the younger generation to be fair, avoid blind fanaticism, and remain calm amidst the cacophony of hoaxes and hateful narratives that often fuel division.

Islamic education encourages people to respect differences of opinion as a blessing. Practically, this strategy is implemented through cooperative learning and a humanist approach that teaches that cultural and religious diversity is a sociological reality that must be accepted with open arms. This fosters the character of a younger generation that is not only inclusive in the real world but also agents of peace, capable of mitigating *cyberbullying* and identity conflicts on digital platforms.

The ultimate goal of developing moderate character in the younger generation in the digital era is to produce *individuals* with digital intelligence and noble character. Moderate character is measured by indicators of wise behavior, the ability to combat radicalism, a strong sense of social responsibility, and concern for the environment. Through the example of teachers and the strengthening of noble morals, Islamic education serves as a primary foundation in developing a generation capable of becoming agents of change. These are young people who are steadfast in Islamic principles, yet flexible and contribute to building harmony and justice in an increasingly digitally connected global society.

### **b. Balance Character**

The development of balanced character in Islamic education is a systematic effort to achieve harmony between the worldly and the hereafter. Balanced character stems from a holistic educational approach, in which spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social aspects are developed simultaneously. The ultimate goal is to achieve the status of *insan kamil* (a perfect human being) who is not only cognitively intelligent but also spiritually strong.<sup>29</sup> From this perspective, Islamic education rejects the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge, but instead integrates the two as a unified whole. This balance ensures that intellectual progress

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<sup>27</sup> Dian Paula April Juwar et al., "Purwadita: Journal of Religion and Culture Transformation of Teaching Methods in the Independent Curriculum," *Purwadita: Journal of Religion and Culture* 8, no. 1 (2024).

<sup>28</sup> Rifqan Hidayat et al., "Islamic Education (Paradigm of Wasaathiyah Islam, Ummatan Wasathan, Tolerance and Religious Moderation)," *Nusantara Journal of Educational Innovation* 6, no. 3 (2025): 3.

<sup>29</sup> Fajar Al and Agung Pangeran Bungsu Mahmudi, "Al-Ghazali and Islamic Educational Communication: The Path to the Perfect Man of Dawn," *Creative: Journal of Islamic and Humanitarian Thought* 23, no. 2 (2025): 1.

is always accompanied by moral virtues such as honesty, trustworthiness, and justice, so that the knowledge acquired benefits the universe.

Building a balanced character is achieved through strategies derived directly from the Quran and Sunnah, namely *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) and *uswah hasanah* (exemplary behavior). Purification of the soul serves as an emotional balance, keeping individuals calm and in control amidst the pressures of globalization.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, the role models of teachers and parents serve as a practical bridge for the younger generation to see how abstract values like discipline and empathy are realized in concrete actions. The synergy between inner cleansing and good examples of behavior creates a foundation of character that is not easily shaken by the currents of time.

In the digital age, a balanced character is tested through an individual's ability to interact with technology. Islamic education plays a crucial role in integrating digital media not only as a learning tool but also as a space for practicing religious values. The younger generation is taught to cultivate *balance* in using technology, using it as a means of preaching and positive creativity rather than becoming trapped in a vortex of hoaxes or moral decadence. With the wise use of technology, religious education remains relevant and effective, equipping students with digital literacy grounded in strong Islamic ethics.

Socially, Islamic education serves as a filter against the negative influences of globalization and a solution to the moral crisis facing adolescents.<sup>31</sup> A balanced character fosters a heightened social awareness, where individual interests are consistently aligned with the public good. This fosters ethical leadership capable of prioritizing justice. As agents of change, young people with balanced character are expected not only to protect themselves from exposure to extremism or radicalism but also to actively contribute to fostering peace and harmony amidst complex social diversity.

### **c. Tolerance Character**

Modern civilization, with its rapid digitalization, demands a reorientation of Islamic education in its approach to social interaction. John Dewey's view of education oriented toward ethical personal development aligns with the concept of character formation in Islam, which emphasizes the ability to sort information (*tabayyun*).<sup>32</sup> In the digital era, tolerance is understood not only verbally but also through ethical awareness in managing interactions in cyberspace. This step is urgently needed to shape responsible young people, where the ability to refrain from spreading hateful narratives is a tangible form of moral integrity and is reinforced by Islamic values of honesty.

Sherry Turkle's critique of the decline in emotional connections due to technology serves as a wake-up call for Islamic education to revitalize the value of empathy.<sup>33</sup> Tolerance in Islam is not simply about allowing differences, but about the ability to feel and understand others' feelings (*ta' ruf* and *taf hum*). Character education must encompass the virtual dimension by teaching young people to remain human even when communicating without face-

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<sup>30</sup> Siti Mutholingah, "The Method of Purifying the Soul (Tazkiyah Al-Nafs) and Its Implications for Islamic Religious Education," *Ta'limuna* 10, no. 01 (2021): 1.

<sup>31</sup> Aulia et al. Nuraini, "The Role of Pancasila as a Filter from the Negative Influences of Globalization," *DIKKESH* 1, no. 1 (2025): 6.

<sup>32</sup> Novarita et al., "Analysis of the Implementation of John Dewey's Progressivism Theory in Christian Religious Education Learning," *Journal of Educational Sciences* , 2023, 2.

<sup>33</sup> Bambang et al. Mudjiyanto, "Digital Anthropomorphism and the Fading of Emotional Support: An Analysis of Gen Z's Social Void in the Digital Era," *Jimu: Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal* 03, no. 03 (2025): 2.

to-face contact. This empathy is the foundation for inclusive digital interactions, so that differences in religious views do not lead to hostility but rather to constructive dialogue.

The opportunities for exploring ideas offered by the digital era must be guided by Islamic education toward constructive goals that bring blessings to the universe (*rahmatan lil-lam n*).<sup>34</sup> The creativity of the younger generation in using technology needs to be guided so that it can solve social problems, not create division. In the context of tolerance, creativity can be realized through the production of inspiring Islamic preaching content and digital innovations that help minority groups. Thus, the potential of creativity becomes not only self-expression but also an instrument for strengthening unity and humanity.

Islamic education places respect for diversity as a key pillar of peace, in line with the thinking of Amartya Sen. The internet provides broad access to interaction across cultures and religions, which, if not accompanied by the value of tolerance, will trigger conflict. Islamic education teaches that plurality is *a sunnatullah (God's will)* that demands maturity in attitude. Through the implementation of technology-based multicultural education, the younger generation is being shaped into individuals who are open and respectful of differences, making tolerance a moral compass in building harmony amidst the complexities of global civilization.

#### **d. Character of Justice**

The formation of a just character in the younger generation in Islamic education in the digital era demands the transformation of theological values into concrete actions in the limitless cyberspace. In the theological dimension, the principle of justice (*i'tid l*) which is sourced from the nature of Allah SWT (*Al-Adl*) must be translated as digital integrity. The younger generation is taught that acting justly in the digital era is not merely an ethical choice, but a form of worship and a manifestation of faith according to the command of QS. Al-Ma'ida: 8. Amidst the often biased flow of information, this theological justice is manifested in an honest attitude when consuming or sharing content, as well as the courage to remain objective even in the midst of pressure from groups or social media algorithms that tend to be biased.

Curricularly, the integration of justice values extends beyond classical texts to digital literacy and cyber citizenship. Islamic education connects the Prophet Muhammad's exemplary practice of upholding justice to the context of digital rights and personal data protection.<sup>35</sup> Through Islamic Cultural History, students learn how the principles of deliberation (*shura*) and social justice are applied in a diverse society, which is then contextualized to address the digital divide and ensure equitable participation for all levels of society in the virtual public sphere.

Interactive learning methods such as *Project-Based Learning* (PBL) have become highly relevant in the digital age for developing sensitivity to systemic injustice. Students are encouraged to analyze contemporary ethical dilemmas, such as the biased use of *artificial intelligence* or the practice of *cyberbullying* that oppresses others.<sup>36</sup> By undertaking technology-based social projects, young people not only learn theories of justice but also design

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<sup>34</sup> Yudhita Omayra, "The Paradigm of Islamic Leadership as Rahmatal Lil 'Alamin in the World of Islamic Education and Social Society," *Jurnal Bina Ummat* 4, no. 1 (2021): 1.

<sup>35</sup> Ngatmin Abbas et al., "Exemplary Education of Salahuddin Al-Ayyubi in the Context of Islamic Education in the Era of Society 5.0," 2023 2, no. 2 (2023): 1.

<sup>36</sup> Tuti Mutia et al., "The Effectiveness of Interactive E-Modules Based on Project Based Learning on Students' Creative Thinking Skills," *Qeodika: Journal of Geography Studies and Education* 9, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.29408/geodika.v9i1.28193>.

equitable digital interventions to protect vulnerable groups, enabling technology to serve as an instrument of good, not a tool of oppression.

The role of teachers as *good role models* has expanded to include digital *role models*. Teachers who demonstrate fair behavior in treating students without favoritism in both physical and online classrooms lay the foundation for a healthy school ecosystem. A democratic and transparent school environment fosters students' awareness that the rights of every individual in the digital space must be respected. This prevents discriminatory behavior and fosters critical thinking in students to respond to various socio-digital issues proportionally and wisely.

Social engagement and community service in the digital era require young people to become agents of change, actively upholding justice. Through digital advocacy programs and online mentoring, the principles of good deeds are realized by combating hoaxes and speaking up for those oppressed online. Islamic education based on Aswaja aims to produce balanced individuals: individuals who are intelligent in utilizing technology while maintaining a firm moral commitment to bringing justice, empathy, and harmony amidst the increasingly complex dynamics of global civilization.

### **Implications of Character Building for the Young Generation Through Islamic Education Based on the Aswaja Understanding in the Digital Era**

Character building in Islamic education in the digital age requires strategic integration between technology and noble values to produce a generation with moral resilience. The following is a five-paragraph narrative of the implications of character building for moderation, balance, tolerance, and justice:

- a. The first implication is the strengthening of moderate character (*tawassuth*) through critical digital literacy. As Tony Wagner emphasizes the value of character in the 21st century, Islamic education guides the younger generation to avoid being trapped in the polarity of information extremism. The practice of anti-hoax campaigns in Indonesia is evidence that digital moderation is realized through an attitude of *tabayyun* (verification). The younger generation is educated to be wise mediators, using social media as a space to spread calming and inclusive narratives, so that ideological polarization can be reduced through ethical digital intelligence.
- b. Furthermore, developing a balanced character (*taw zun*) implies the proportional use of technology to maintain psychological and spiritual stability. Referring to Jean Twenge's research on the risks of screen addiction, Islamic education based on the thoughts of Imam Al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of self-*control*. This balance requires individuals to be able to integrate digital activities with quality real-world social relationships and personal worship. Technology is positioned not as a master dominating consciousness, but as a supporting instrument in aligning physical and spiritual needs amid the dynamics of modern civilization.
- c. The character of tolerance (*tas muh*) has broad implications for strengthening human brotherhood (*ukhuwah basyariyah*) through global connectivity. Case studies of schools in Canada and Finland demonstrate that cross-cultural virtual interactions can foster empathy if managed properly. In Islamic education, technology becomes a means to practice tolerance by respecting differences of opinion and cultural background in cyberspace. The younger generation is trained to become digital citizens who value plurality as inevitable, so that differences no longer become a trigger for conflict, but rather a space for getting to know each other (*ta' ruf*) with dignity.

d. The implications of the character of justice ( *i'tid l* ) in digital Islamic education are manifested in a commitment to upholding truth and equal rights in cyberspace. In line with the technology ethics curriculum at Cambridge University, Islamic education instills that every digital action has moral consequences. Justice means providing the public with the right to correct information, combating *cyberbullying* , and not being unjust through thumbs on social media. By internalizing the character of *Al-Adl* , the younger generation grows into individuals with integrity, ensuring that their digital creativity and innovation are aimed at inclusive social good.

Comprehensively, all these values lead to the formation of a young generation with intellectual intelligence and noble character. The ultimate implication of adaptive Islamic education is the ability to utilize technology as a "tool" without losing the "spirit" of humanity. By integrating the values of moderation, balance, tolerance, and justice, Islamic education transforms into a bulwark against the negative impacts of digital disruption. The result is the emergence of agents of change who can adapt to changing times without being uprooted from their spiritual roots, creating harmony amidst global complexity.

### **Recommendation**

As a conclusion to the series of studies on Islamic Education Based on the Aswaja Ideology in Character Building of the Young Generation in the Digital Era, although this study has successfully mapped the conceptual and theoretical framework regarding moderation, balance, tolerance, and justice within the Aswaja framework, the researcher acknowledges several shortcomings. This research is still descriptive-qualitative in nature, focusing primarily on literature exploration and limited case studies. Therefore, it is not yet able to present general empirical data regarding the effectiveness of this model across different typologies of Islamic educational institutions, such as traditional Islamic boarding schools versus modern integrated Islamic schools. Furthermore, the limitations in quantitatively evaluating the long-term impact of the internalization of Aswaja values on the digital behavior of the younger generation is a gap that needs to be acknowledged in this study.

Based on these shortcomings, recommendations for further research are directed at developing more applicable and comparative field studies. Future researchers are advised to conduct classroom action research *or* quasi-experiments to test the efficacy of the Aswaja values-based curriculum in reducing the tendency towards digital radicalism and *cyberbullying* among adolescents. Furthermore, a more in-depth study is needed on the role of artificial intelligence ( *AI* ) in assisting the process of *tahdz b al-nafs* (self-discipline), as well as how digital algorithms can be designed in line with the principles of *At-Tawazun* to support the creation of a more civilized digital ecosystem.

### **CONCLUSION**

As a conclusion of this entire series of studies, the research confirms that Islamic education based on the Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja) understanding is a doctrinal-traditional model that is a highly adaptive epistemological and ethical framework in responding to the disruption of digital civilization. The main findings show that through the internalization of four main pillars: (a) moderation ( *tawassuth* ), (b) balance ( *taw zun* ), (c) tolerance ( *tas muh* ), and (d) justice ( *i'tid l* ). Islamic education is able to transform into a "mental filter" that equips the younger generation with critical digital literacy skills as well as strong moral integrity. The implication is that Islamic education based on the Aswaja understanding is able to bridge the dichotomy between technological progress ( *aqliyyah* ) and spiritual authority (

*naqliyyah* ), so that the use of digital devices no longer dominates human consciousness, but becomes a supporting instrument for achieving wisdom, social welfare, and global harmony. This educational model offers a preventive solution to radicalism and moral decadence in cyberspace, while ensuring that the younger generation grows into agents of change or *ins n adab* who are able to navigate the complexities of the modern era without losing their spiritual roots and human spirit.

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